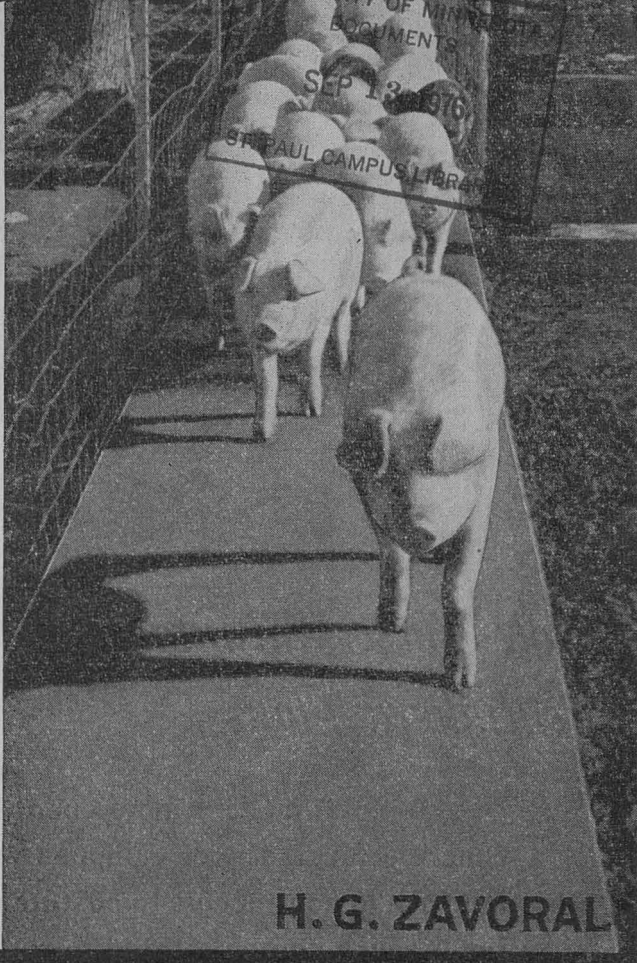
Centralized HOG PLAN



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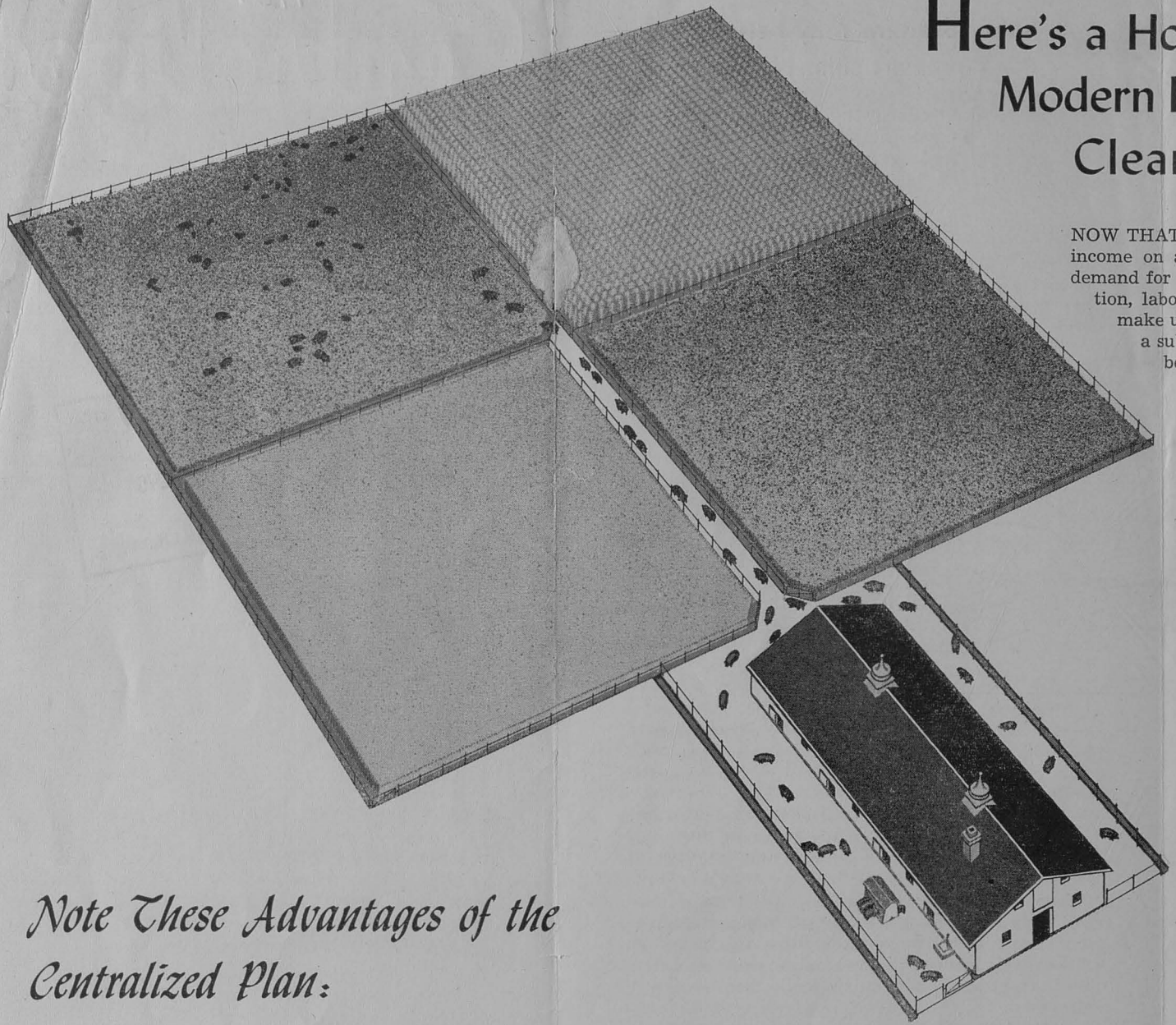
Here's a Hog Management Plan with Modern Hog House, Feeding Floor, Clean Pasture — All in One



Note These Advantages of the Centralized Plan:

(1) A modern, permanent hog house which can be used the year round. (2) A concrete feeding floor equipped with gutter for easier cleaning. (3) Concrete-floored lane giving hogs access to pasture without contact with contaminated ground. (4) Four fields which can be rotated so that hogs will always have a clean pasture.

NOW THAT SCIENTIFIC hog raising has become the chief source of income on a large number of Minnesota farms, there is increasing demand for a system of handling hogs that combines adequate sanitation, labor saving, early farrowing, and other practices that go to make up a successful business. Many farmers have indicated that a substantial investment would be justified if the system could be counted on to turn out good hogs year after year without running into disease troubles.

A complete hog plan should provide for at least three things:

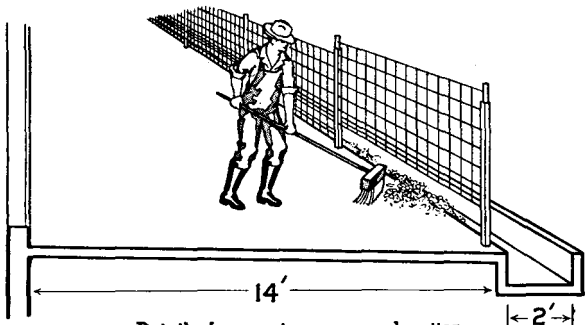
1. **Hogs must be kept on clean pasture or on concrete.**
2. **Feed and water should be conveniently near and self-fed whenever possible.**
3. **Facilities must be handy for farrowing, castrating, vaccinating, weighing, and the like, or these operations may be neglected.**

A plan which meets these qualifications is the *Centralized Hog Plan* recommended by the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service and tested by a number of foresighted swine raisers. In brief the plan is:

Permanent Hog House. The system is built around a modern permanent house, equipped for year-round use. Everything can be done under one roof—farrowing, marketing, weaning, weighing, castrating, vaccinating, sorting, and loading for market. These practices are often delayed or neglected if the pigs are scattered and if there are no facilities for handling them. At farrowing time it is especially desirable to have the sows under one roof, in a warm dry place.

Concrete Feeding Floors. The hog house is provided with concrete aprons on two, three, or all four sides. Fences keep the pigs off contaminated ground and on the concrete. For drainage and easier cleaning the concrete apron slopes outward about an inch every four feet and a gutter is provided at the outside. The concrete can be scraped off and hosed frequently. The manure is piled in the gutter outside the fence for easy hauling.

Central Feeding and Watering. Under this plan large self-feeders can be placed on the feeding floor. Waterers connected to the farm water system keep the supply always fresh and cool. Feeding operations are near the feed storage centers, and hauling feed



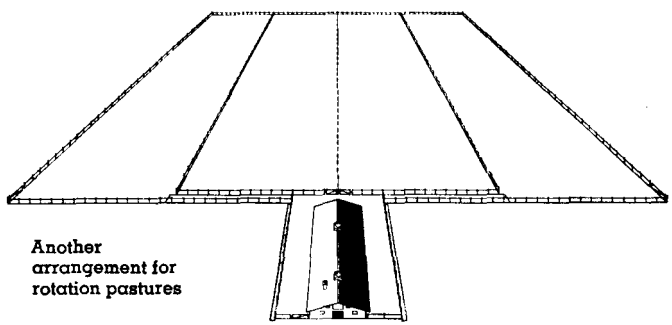
Detail of concrete apron and gutter

and water to outlying hog lots is eliminated. Much labor can be saved by having hogs come to feed and water rather than hauling supplies to them.

Concrete Runway to Pasture. The centralized plan recognizes the value of good pasture in insuring hog health and getting economical hog gains. Yet pigs must be kept off contaminated ground. The answer is a three-foot concrete runway, closely fenced to keep the hogs on the walk, leading to whatever clean pasture the herd is using. The runway takes the hogs direct from feeding floor to pasture. It can be so located in relation to four rotation pastures that the same walk can be used to reach any pasture.

Four Rotation Pastures. Four fenced fields, arranged in any way that will make them accessible by the concrete runway, supply the pasture for this system. Hogs are run on only one field each year. The three-year rest from pasturing eliminates most of the danger of parasites being carried over. A convenient rotation for the four fields is corn the first year, oats seeded with legume the second, hay the third, and hog pasture the fourth. Fields should be large enough so that a single field will supply pasture for one year. An acre of alfalfa or clover is recommended for every 20 to 25 pigs when grain is full-fed. No shade or equipment need be kept in the pasture because the hogs always go to the main house.

The above system may not fit all farms. The first cost is comparatively high, but farmers who have tried it point out that this extra cost is balanced by savings in labor and movable equipment.



Another arrangement for rotation pastures

Other Systems May Better Fit Your Particular Needs

Confinement System. The system of raising pigs entirely on concrete has gained favor with many hog growers. The pigs are farrowed in permanent houses and spend their entire life up to time of market in the house and on concrete feeding floors or sun porches. The disadvantages are the extra work of cleaning and the inability to utilize pastures in the ration. To avoid nutrition troubles it is necessary to feed a good quality alfalfa or legume hay and to pay more attention to providing the necessary minerals and other items in the hog's diet.

Advantages of this plan are saving of labor in handling and feeding pigs in one location, better control of disease by keeping the pigs off contaminated ground at all times, and saving in expense of fencing and portable equipment. When pigs are raised on concrete entirely, 12 to 15 square feet of floor space should be provided for each animal. It is also necessary to keep the floors scrupulously clean.

Portable Houses. Some of Minnesota's largest swine growers use movable colony houses. This system is well adapted to a sanitation program. Every year, before using, houses are cleaned, disinfected, and moved to clean pastures. They especially fit the one-litter-a-year program where sows farrow in May and June. Movable houses are low in cost. They may be used for shelter on pasture as well as for housing brood sows in the winter.

There are several types of movable, heated farrowing houses. They may be used for early farrowing with good results but take more time and labor. This system affords the best use of pastures and thus saves on protein and grain.

Combination System. A combination system is used by many farmers. Pigs are farrowed in the permanent hog house and moved to pasture into portable houses as soon as weather permits. They are either finished on pasture or returned to the concrete feeding floors for fattening. Pasture is required that has not been used for hogs for at least two years. Although this system requires more equipment it is used at present more than any other system in Minnesota.

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